

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Canceled).

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network, comprising:

a holder configured to have ~~for having~~ digital content, which is set to become usable by an execution key, and holding a right to let a user ~~third person~~ use the digital content;

a distributor configured to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ the digital content from the holder and to distribute ~~distributing~~ the digital content to a user;

an advertiser configured to posses ~~for possessing~~ an advertising information piece to be provided for the user; and

an administrator configured to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ the execution key from the holder, ~~obtaining~~ obtain the advertising information piece from the advertiser, receive ~~receiving~~ an execution declaration of the digital content from the user, download ~~downloading~~ the advertising information piece and the execution key to the user through the network, collect ~~collecting~~ an advertisement rate from the advertiser that, ~~which~~ corresponds to the number of execution times of the digital content used by the user, ~~from the advertiser~~ and pay ~~paying~~ an execution fee to the holder that, ~~which~~ corresponds to the number of execution times of the digital content, ~~to the holder~~.

Claim 3 (Original): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein the advertising information piece downloaded to the user is displayed simultaneously with the digital content in cases where the user uses the digital content by using the execution key downloaded to the user.

Claim 4 (Original): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein the advertising information piece downloaded to the user is displayed in a time period between time periods in which the digital content is displayed in cases where the user uses the digital content by using the execution key downloaded to the user.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein the distributor notifies the holder of the number of download times of the digital content downloaded to the user, and the holder pays to the distributor a download charge, ~~which that~~ corresponds to the number of download times of the digital content, ~~to the distributor~~.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein, when the administrator receives the execution declaration from the user, the administrator downloads to the user a plurality of advertising information pieces and the execution key, which permits the user to use the digital content a prescribed number of times, ~~to the user in cases where the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user~~.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein, ~~the user uses the digital content by using an execution key downloaded from the administrator in the past while seeing an advertising information piece downloaded from the administrator in the past in cases where~~ when the execution key is not currently downloaded to the user from the administrator because of an abnormal state even though a prescribed time has passed ~~passes~~ after the user sends ~~sent~~ the execution declaration

Application No. 09/729,866
Reply to Office Action of May 20, 2004

of the digital content, the user uses the digital content by using an execution key downloaded from the administrator in the past while seeing an advertising information piece downloaded from the administrator in the past.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 7, wherein after the abnormal state has passed the user notifies the administrator that the user used ~~uses~~ the digital content by using the execution key downloaded from the administrator in the past ~~after the abnormal state is finished~~.

Claim 9 (Original): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein the advertising information piece downloaded from the administrator to the user corresponds to content of the digital content.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein, when the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user, the administrator requires ~~inquires~~ the user to select ~~of~~ a genre of the advertising information piece to be downloaded to the user ~~in cases where the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user,~~ and the advertising information piece[[,]] ~~of which a~~ the selected genre ~~is selected by the user,~~ is downloaded to the user.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein, when the administrator receives the execution of declaration of the digital content from the user, the administrator downloads to the user the advertising information piece, ~~which~~ that corresponds to content of another digital content used by the

user in the past, ~~to the user in cases where the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user.~~

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein the administrator collects the advertisement rate[[,]] from the advertiser that ~~which~~ is determined according to a matching point between content of the digital content related to the execution declaration of the user and content of the advertising information piece downloaded from the administrator to the user, ~~from the advertiser.~~

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein the administrator guarantees the advertiser a minimum ~~the lowest~~ number of downloading times [[of]] the advertising information piece is downloaded to the user or a minimum ~~lowest~~ ratio of the number of downloading times [[of]] the advertising information piece is downloaded to the user to the number of downloading times of all advertising information pieces downloaded to the user ~~received from the advertiser.~~

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein, when the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user, the administrator requires ~~inquires~~ the user [[of]] to select a residential district of the user ~~in cases where the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user,~~ and the administrator downloads to the user the digital content that, ~~which~~ closely relates to the residential district of the user, ~~to the user.~~

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein, when the administrator receives the execution declaration of

the digital content from the user, the administrator downloads the digital content, ~~which that~~ closely relates to a residential district of the user[[,]] and a nationwide digital content to the user ~~in cases where the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user.~~

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 2, wherein, when the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user, the administrator downloads to the user the digital content closely related to a residential district of the user, which is obtained from ~~notified by a~~ network operator managing the network, ~~to the user in cases where the administrator receives the execution declaration of the digital content from the user.~~

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network, comprising:

an advertiser configured to possess ~~for possessing~~ an advertising information piece to be provided for a user;

a holder configured to receive ~~for receiving~~ the advertising information piece from the advertiser, having digital content, ~~which that~~ is set to become usable by an execution key, and to hold ~~holding~~ a right to let a user ~~third-person~~ use the digital content;

a distributor configured to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ from the holder the digital content, ~~in which that includes~~ the advertising information piece ~~is included, from the holder~~ and to distribute ~~distributing~~ the digital content with the advertising information piece to the user; and

an administrator configured to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ the execution key from the holder, ~~receiving~~ receive an execution declaration of the digital content from the user, download

- Application No. 09/729,866
Reply to Office Action of May 20, 2004

~~downloading~~ the execution key to the user through the network, and notify ~~notifying~~ the advertiser of the number of execution times of the digital content used by the user, wherein the holder collects an advertisement rate from the advertiser that, ~~which~~ corresponds to the number of execution times of the digital content used by the user, ~~from the advertiser~~, and the holder pays a download charge to the administrator, ~~which that~~ corresponds to the number of download times of the execution key downloaded from the administrator to the user, ~~to the administrator~~.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network according to claim 17, wherein the distributor notifies the holder of the number of download times of the digital content downloaded to the user, and the holder pays a download charge to the distributor that, ~~which~~ corresponds to the number of download times of the digital content, ~~to the distributor~~.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A digital content billing system using a network, comprising:

a holder configured to have ~~for having~~ digital content, which is set to become usable by an execution key, and to hold ~~holding~~ a right to let a user ~~third person~~ use the digital content;

an advertiser configured to possess ~~for possessing~~ an advertising information piece to be provided for a user; and

an administrator and distributor configured to obtain ~~for obtaining~~ the digital content and the execution key from the holder, receive ~~receiving~~ the advertising information piece from the advertiser, receive ~~receiving~~ an execution declaration of the digital content from the user, download ~~downloading~~ the digital content, the execution key and the advertising

information piece to the user through the network in response to the execution declaration,
~~collect~~ collecting an advertisement rate from the advertiser that,~~which~~ corresponds to the
number of execution times of the digital content used by the user,~~from the advertiser,~~ and
~~pay~~ paying an execution fee to the holder that,~~which~~ corresponds to the number of execution
times of the digital content used by the user,~~to the holder.~~